

Rhode Island Conservation Planning Workbook

Conservation on Your Land



Helping People Help the Land

Information about Your Land

Name of Landowner (s): _____

Farm Name/ Business Name: _____

Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Farm Site Location: _____

Watershed: _____

Describe your land's soils: (sandy, wet, steep, rocky, etc...) _____

Describe any known archaeological, historical or cultural features present on your land: _____

Do you have existing NRCS or FSA maps with fields marked? Yes _____ No _____ (Please Attach)

Describe each of your fields on the chart below.

Field/Land Unit	Acres	Land Use (crop, homestead, forest, wildlife, etc.)	Field Characteristics (production, operation constraints, soil characteristics, etc.)

What is a Conservation Plan?

A Conservation Plan is a tool that helps manage your lands profitably while protecting your natural resources. Soil erosion, water quality, and waste management are just a few of the resource concerns that could be addressed with a plan. The completed conservation plan will describe each of the conservation practices you select to manage your natural resources. The choice to develop or not develop a conservation plan is yours - it is a voluntary process. You make the decisions. You implement the plan.

Conservation planners provide the technical assistance needed to develop and implement your plan. Their help is free. Creating a plan does not provide public access to your property. You control all rights of entry and use. All of the information developed by you belongs to you.

A Conservation Plan consists of nine steps and is relatively complex. This workbook does not result in a complete plan; however, it assists you with the preliminary self-assessment and fact gathering needed for a plan. You need to commit to the process in order for it to work.

After completing this preliminary self-assessment, contact your local United States Department of Agriculture Service Center to be put in contact with a conservation planner. The conservation planner will assist you, or you may employ a qualified private consultant, to complete a plan.



What are the Benefits of a Conservation Plan?

- ☺ Saves money as your land becomes more productive.
- ☺ Ensures better natural resource quality for you, your animals and your neighbors.
- ☺ Increases your property value.
- ☺ Enhances open space and wildlife habitat.
- ☺ Improves animal health.
- ☺ Prevents off-farm impacts.
- ☺ Contributes to plant health and vigor.
- ☺ Makes your land more attractive and promotes good neighbor relations.
- ☺ Promotes health and safety for your family.

Set Your Objectives

The best place to start planning is to set objectives. Objectives will keep you focused and provide you with a measurement tool to determine progress. Set realistic objectives that can be reached with small achievable steps. State clearly what you want to happen on your land and where you want to be within a selected time frame. Clear objectives will help the conservation planner develop a plan that is right for you.

Natural Resource Objective

Short Term: _____

Long Term: _____

Production & Economic Objectives

Short Term: _____

Long Term: _____

Quality of Life Objective

Short Term: _____

Long Term: _____

What do you want your land to look like in five years?

Resource Concerns & Problems

Conservation planning provides the opportunity to address a broad reach of resource concerns. Briefly describe your Soil, Water, Air, Plant, Animal and Human resource concerns. (SWAPA+H)

Soil: (e.g. erosion, condition, contaminants) _____

Water: (e.g. quantity, quality) _____

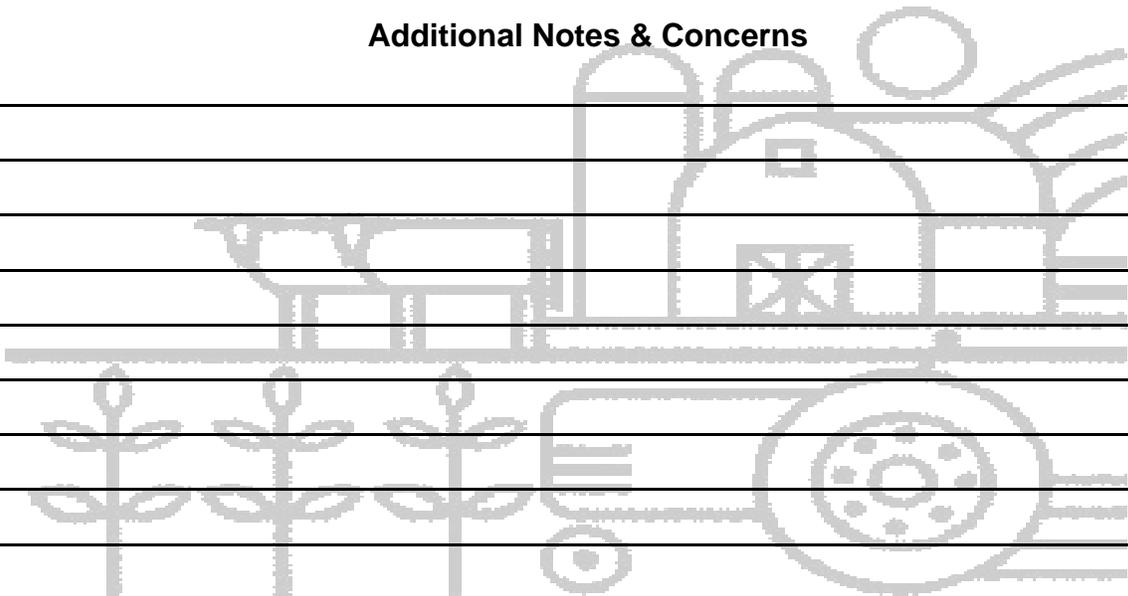
Air Quality: (e.g. dust, chemical drift, odors) _____

Plant: (e.g. native habitats, pasture conditions, invasive species, plant health) _____

Animal: (e.g. wildlife habitat, livestock health) _____

Human Considerations: (e.g. land ownership, economics, available labor, personal objectives) _____

Additional Notes & Concerns



Water

Do you have a pond or reservoir? Yes ___ No ___ How Many? _____

If yes, what is the primary purpose? (wildlife, irrigation, etc.) _____

List streams or ditches running through or adjacent to your land: _____

Describe any flooding or drainage concerns you may have: _____

Describe wetland areas: _____

What is your well yield (gallons per min.)? _____

What is your well depth? _____

Results of last well water test: _____

Last date septic system serviced: _____

Do you have buffers adjacent to the water bodies? _____ Width? _____



Assistance Information

List contracts, easements, and/or agreements entered into for technical or financial assistance, which restrict land management, practices: _____

List conservation practices you have applied: _____

List conservation practices you have considered applying: _____

List funding programs in which you are interested, if known: _____

Are the development rights sold, if not, are you interested? _____

Additional questions, information

Cropping Supplement

Crops grown in a typical year	Average Yield/Units	Total Acres	Plant Date	Harvest Date

Crop Rotation Description

Field #	Acres	Typical Cropping Sequence

Tillage or other field operation	Implement	Crop	Date

Most recent soil test date: _____

Please bring current soil test results to your planning meeting.

Cropping Supplement

Fertilizers/Amendments

Field (s)	Fertilizer	Rate	Method of Applications	Date	Acres

Are you keeping fertilizer/ amendment records? _____

Do you use Integrated Pest Management?

If yes, list the IPM practices you use.

Are you keeping pesticide records? _____

Are you certified organic? _____

Do you use organic farming techniques? _____

Livestock Supplement

Livestock Types & Breeds (dairy, horse, beef, etc.)	Numbers	Average Weight	# Days Held Annually

Describe your livestock management: (confined feeding, forages and roughages used, season of use, grazing system) _____

Describe your manure storage: _____

Describe your livestock watering system: _____

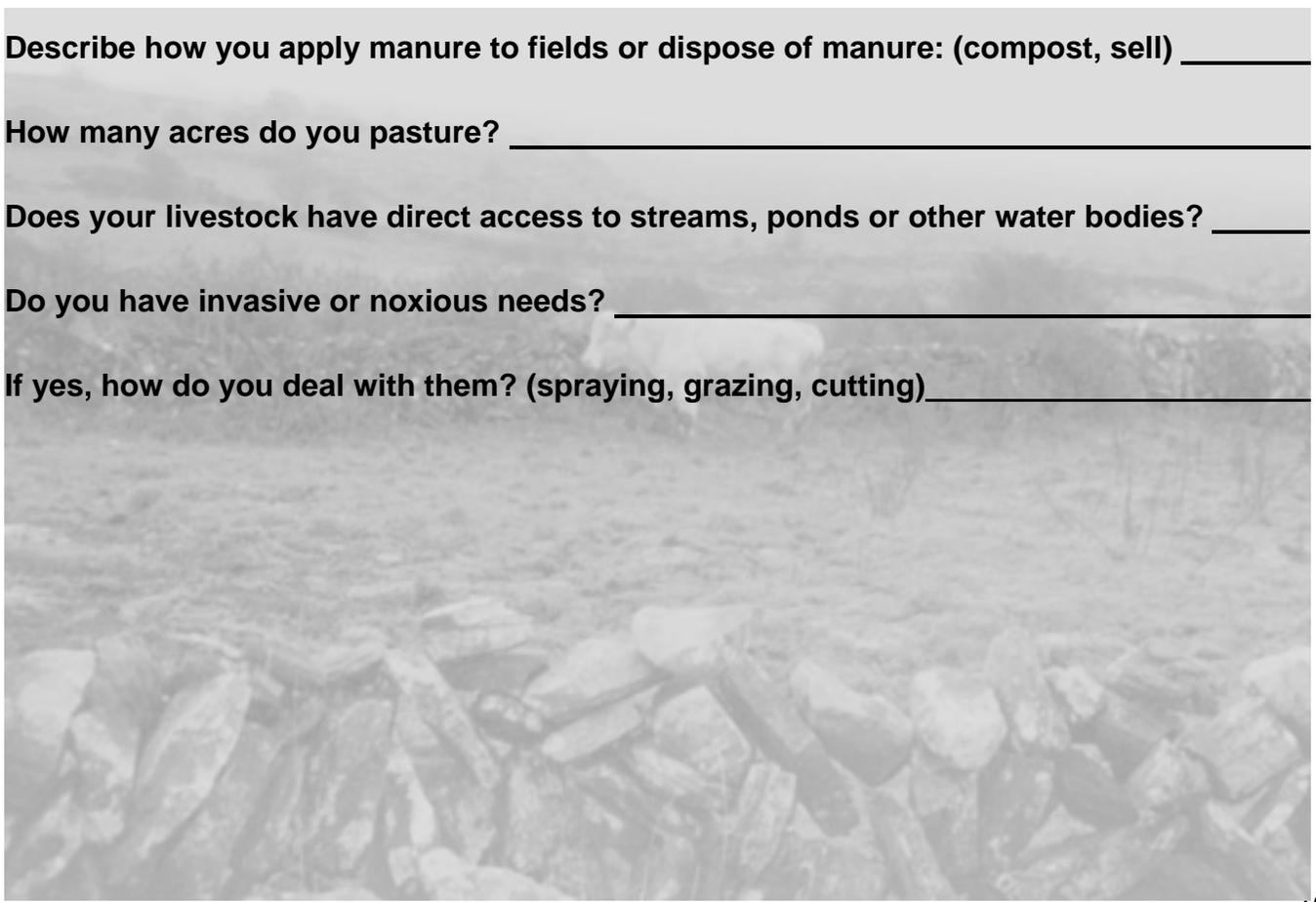
Describe how you apply manure to fields or dispose of manure: (compost, sell) _____

How many acres do you pasture? _____

Does your livestock have direct access to streams, ponds or other water bodies? _____

Do you have invasive or noxious needs? _____

If yes, how do you deal with them? (spraying, grazing, cutting) _____



Irrigation Supplement

List your irrigation source(s) (well, pond, city, town): _____

What is your irrigation method (sprinkler, drip or describe type): _____

Sprinkler Irrigation Systems

Field Number							
Field Size (acres)							
Typical Crop							
Length of lateral(s) (feet)							
Distance between laterals or move distance (feet)							
Number of sets per field							
Number of laterals per set							
Number sprinklers per set							
Sprinkler flow rate (gpm)							
Flow rate to each set (gpm)							
Time to irrigate each set (hours)							
Interval between irrigations (days)							

Pump Information

Booster Pump	Yes or No
Deep well	Yes or No
HP	
Flow rate (cfs or gpm)	

Irrigation Supplement

Micro-Sprinkler/Drip Irrigation System

Field Number						
Field Size (acres)						
Typical Crop						
Length of laterals (feet)						
Number of laterals per row						
Distance between laterals (feet)						
Number of sets per field						
Number of laterals per set						
Emitter flow rate (gph)						
Flow rate to each set (gpm)						
Time to irrigate each set (hours)						
Interval between irrigations (days)						

Pump Information

Booster Pump	Yes or No
Deep well	Yes or No
HP	
Flow rate (cfs or gpm)	

What is your method of scheduling irrigation? (rain gauge, tensiometer, crop stress, etc.) _____

(When and how long) _____



Forest Supplement

1. What is your project area? _____

2. What is your forestry interest? (wildlife habitat, recreation, timber production, cordwood, forest stand improvement) _____

3. Do you currently have a Forest Management/Stewardship Plan? Y or N

4. What are the dominant tree types? _____

5. Do you propose tree planting? If so, what kind? _____

6. Are there other wildlife conservation practices you are considering? _____

7. Have there been previous forestry management activities? (selective harvesting, thinning, brush removal, wildlife clearings) _____



Wildlife Supplement

A. What Type of Habitat (s) are you interested in restoring, enhancing, or creating?

What are your wildlife objectives? _____

Briefly describe currently or previous wildlife management activities. _____

- Freshwater Wetland:
 - Riparian Wetland Habitat
 - Stream Habitat
 - Vernal Pool
 - Forested Wetland
 - Emergent Wetland
- Riparian & Coastal Upland Buffer
- Anadromous Fish Passage
- Upland-Early Successional Wildlife Habitat
 - Warm Season Grassland
 - Seeding/Sapling Forest
- Field Border
- Coastal Wetland
 - Eelgrass Meadow
 - Salt Marsh
 - Brackish Marsh
 - Freshwater Tidal Marsh
 - Coastal Lagoon
- Other Habitat Type (s) _____

B. Total Acres of Property _____ **C. Total Restoration Area (if known)** _____

D. Total Habitat Area that will benefit from restoration (if known): _____
(Include any contiguous habitat area adjacent to restoration site that will benefit from project-this land use area should be actively or passively managed as wildlife habitat)

E. Watershed: _____

F. Is any portion of the proposed project location under a temporary or long-term conservation easement? (i.e., RIDEM Forest Legacy Program, Farm Forest and Open Space Program, or Conservation Deed Restriction, etc.)? If so, does the easement stipulate any particular land management goals or objectives? _____

Property Management Goals if Known:

Has there been any previous wildlife assessments location? If so, explain and submit copy with your application materials: (plant, animals, hydrology, etc.) _____

Draw a general map, or attach a map of the land you wish to enroll in CTA here.

The form consists of a large rectangle divided into four equal quadrants by a vertical line and a horizontal line. In the top-right quadrant, there is a north arrow pointing upwards with the letter 'N' above it. The rest of the box is empty, intended for drawing a map.

Workbook Completed Congratulations!

Now that you have completed the self-assessment workbook, please bring the following to your local NRCS office to submit your application:

1. This completed workbook.
2. Plan map or aerial photo of your operation (if available).
3. Identification (and location, if possible) of practices installed on each field.
4. The written records and documentation you have identified in the workbook (at least 2 years of records). See page 40 for examples of records you will need. Records can be as simple as a pocket calendar record or as complex as a computer printout.
5. Number of acres and crop rotations for each field.
6. Management activities being used, such as nutrient management, grazing management, haying, etc.
7. Application amounts and rates for fertilizers, pesticides, manure application, etc.
8. Location of wells, roads, windbreaks, storage buildings, etc.
9. If you do not own the land, copies of agreements such as lease, power of attorney, or a letter from the landowner indicating that you have current control of the farming operation.

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